

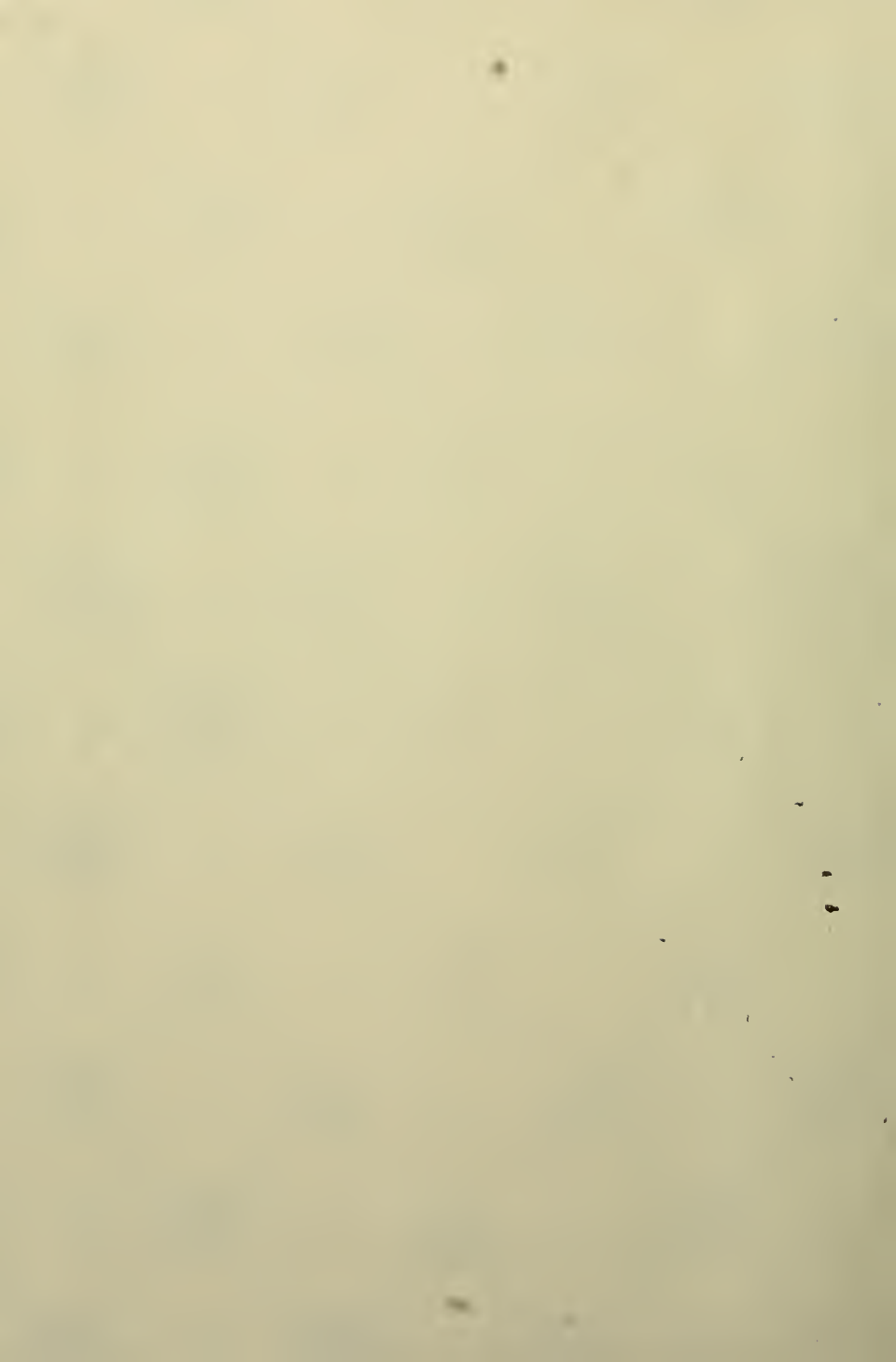
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Dedicated to
K. M. T.

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FOREWORD

This book of verse can scarcely hope
To special purpose serve,
And yet some one may chance to say;
"It surely has its *nerve*."

Since nerve is kin to courage
Which is of splendid use,
That single mite of merit
May stand as some excuse.

TWO VIEWS OF CHRISTMAS.

IN the rush of the world and its greed for gold,
They say that Sentiment's growing cold,
That even Christmas isn't the same,
The spirit is gone, and only in name
Is the sacred season observed today
And not in the sweet old-fashioned way
Of "Peace on Earth, good will to men."
'Tis now but a time of weariness when
The giving is but the paying of debt,
As the fetters of obligation fret.
No touch of tenderness leaves its trace
In the whirl of Mammon's market place.

This pitiful pessimistic view
May be the state of a sordid few,
But the spirit of Christ is just as strong
In the heart of the busy hustling throng—
And millions of splendid deeds are done
For the sake of Bethlehem's gentle son.
The wanderer homeward wends his way
Drawn by the magnet of Christmas day,
While severed friendships feel the glow
Of reflected gleams from the Long Ago,
And Conscience gives a memory smile
To the good intentions of After-while;
For the Star of the East still shines as bright
As it did on that distant glorious night,
And Wise men now and forever-more
Will the Prince of Love and Peace adore.

THE OLD YEAR'S REVERY.

O, here's a kiss, a New Year's gift
From childish lips so sweet,
A silver'd head low boweth down
The warm caress to meet.

O, here's a blush neath drooping eyes,
A glad "yes" whispered low;
A maiden fair, a suitor bold,
The world with love aglow.

And here's a hope that's just fulfilled,
And there's another crushed;
And here's a voice that singeth still
While truer tones are hushed.

A dimpled baby cooing bliss
Into a mother's heart,
A little grave beneath the snow
A sadder woman's part.

And Wrong is clothed in regal garb
And yields a mighty sway,
While Right is wrapped in slumber robes
And hideth by the way.

The roses and forget-me-nots
Have left the garden bed,—
But shyly vagrant violets
Are blooming there instead.

And Joy is smiling close beside
The deepest wail of woe,
While hearts are cold that beat so warm
A little while ago.

Such things and many more as strange
Across my threshold lie,
O, New Year, just the same t'will be
When comes thy time to die.

To every life I've something brought
On each brow left a trace,
That thou with all thy smiles or tears
Canst never quite efface.

THE DAY OF RESOLUTION.

(January First)

Volumes of good resolutions are rustling their leaves today
Disturbed by the breeze of regret for promises gone astray;
For every year on the first we feel a thrill of delight
That opportunity comes to start some fresh intentions right.
And memory softly sleeps as we usually duplicate
Determinations often made upon the annual date.
It really matters not so much that some resolves fall through
So long as we never quite forget the good we *intended* to do.

HIS REWARD OF MERIT.

They had the merriest Christmas time
Enjoyed for many a year,
Plenty of holly and mistletoe
Plenty of fun and cheer.
The chimney stockings overflowed,
The pantry shelf was great,
With loads of luscious things to eat
Arrayed in tempting state.
Such charming entertaining, too,
Luncheons, teas and dances,
With cozy corner matinees
That promised rich romances.
Each member gave the other what
A timely hint expressed;
It really seemed that Santa Claus
Had feathered the family nest.
And presents went to relatives
And friends in rich supply
While father who furnished the cash for it all
Received for his neck a tie.

WISDOM OF THE WIDOW.

“What shall I do for Christmas, what shall I give away?
I’ve scarcely any money to spend this holiday;
And yet I must remember friends and relatives dear
And also the little children, in token of Christmas cheer.”

She went her way rejoicing to the five and ten-cent store,
And when she left its portal, carried bundles by the score.

A very rare assortment of every kind of toy
And many other modest ambassadors of joy.

A wagon, train and rattle, balls and games and blocks,
Ribbons, caps and aprons and several shades of socks.

Calendars, cards and candy, mirrors, mittens and mats,
Jumping Jacks and marbles, a couple of calico cats.

Cologne and horns and baskets, dolls and dominoes,
Checkers and letter paper and crocheted baby hose.

A splendid little soldier, a grizzly Teddy-bear,
Horns and drums and whistles and dolly’s rocking-chair.

Scarfs, and ties and runners, knitted shopping bags
A scrap-book and a picture, a bunch of holly tags.

Her arms were overflowing with stacks of good intents
That cost her altogether three dollars and fifty cents.

In every single article selected with special care
The sweetest *test* essence of Christmas, the spirit of giving was there.

And that merry little widow in generous delight
Enjoyed a treat in spending her money with all her might.

MOUNT OF AMBITION.

(Pike's Peak.)

Did great Ambition give thee birth, thou Wonder of the west,
Art thou a strange and mighty growth of soaring wild unrest?
Or was thy aim to climb until thou touched high Heaven's wall,
And waiting there be first to hear the Master's final call?

Rare gifts thou gathered in thy flights as did the Wise of Old,
Sweet flowers on thy rugged breast above a heart of gold.
Thy jeweled veins fast holding priceless treasures for thy King,
To shame perchance the wealth of trophies human hands may
bring.

So lonely dost thou seem and sad, that tender clouds droop
down,
To wreath about thy royal head a more than regal crown.
The laughing sun grows brighter, too, to welcome thee at dawn,
While moon and stars in silver light seem nearer to thee drawn.

And yet not even thou couldst reach the goal thou wouldst
attain,
And so thy tears in crystal streams flow back to earth again.
The Hand Divine was firmly pressed to thine aspiring brow,
And bade thee go no further up than where thou standest now.

The humblest blossom at thy feet may hear the summons first,
And yet methinks the Father will allay thy lofty thirst,
For noble aspirations checked on earth and seeming lost,
Will some way find the recompense well worth the struggle's
cost.

HERE'S TO MAN.

He's fickle and false,
Constant and true,
It all depends
On the sample in view.

He's good and wicked,
Stupid and wise,
The greatest Conundrum
Under the skies.

We won't give him up
Though fallen from grace,
For there's nothing so good
To put in his place.

BECAUSE OF HER.

Because of her a man became
A leading light in halls of fame,
And equally in quiet ways
Lived nobly all his earthly days.

Yet that sweet woman never knew,
But softly sighed sometimes to rue
That she no greatness could attain,
And seemingly had lived in vain.

THE ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS.

My friend's little army of children
Came running in from play,
With clothes and hands and faces
All smeared and soiled with clay;
But mother-love saw the beauty
No dirt could ever subdue,
As she smiled upon each of the youngsters
And hugged and kissed them, too.

I could but think when we answer
The summons that comes to us all,
And appear before our Father
Responsive to His call;
Though our lives be soiled in the living
Where weeds of the world have grown,
He'll take us in and love us
Because we are His own.
And, O, how sweet the solace
To find He understood,
Through all our sins and trials
The wish of the soul was good.

THE OLD PIANO.

The old piano's voice is cracked
Its melody has flown,
No tuning ever can restore
Its once delightful tone.

You wish Grandfather would exchange
Or buy a Parlor Grand,
Yet this one stirs the spirit chords
Untouched by mortal hand.

I gave it to the dearest girl,
When she became my wife,
And when she played its keys of pearl
It surely sweetened life.

We gathered round it every night
And sang the good old lays,
We raised "Old Hundred" full and free—
To voice our hearts of praise.

We dearly loved The Mocking Bird,
Juanita, and Old Dog Tray,
Home Sweet Home, and Rosin the Beau,
And Darling Nellie Gray.

In time she sang a slumber song
A soothing little tune,
That ripples through my memory still
With the same persuasive croon.

Of course it sounds discordant now
'Twas built for airs refined,
And will not lend its tones to sound
The new suggestive kind.

THE OLD PIANO

It's something like we old-time folks
Who praise the peaceful past,
And think the present pace of things
Is over-loud and fast.

Why yes, I'll get a Parlor Grand—
But the old piano must stay,
'Twould seem like hurting the heart of a friend
If I should send it away.

It seems a sacred thing to me
Deserving special grace,
So have it moved to my own room
You'll find there's plenty of space.

And sometimes, darling, just about
The hour of day's decline,
Be sure to come and sing for me
The songs of Auld Lang Syne.

A MAN'S MISTAKE.

HER LETTER.

Dear Husband of mine. I'm happy to say
My health is improving every day;
There's a magic spell in the summer sea
That proves a perfect balm for me:
Congenial company, too, I find
To tone and stimulate the mind.
There's but one cloud across my sky—
The fact that you are nowhere nigh;
It's awful to think of you there alone
With nought for my absence to atone;
Unless each day you let me know
You're well and happy, I'll homeward go:
But if I knew you were satisfied
Throughout the season I'd here abide.

HIS ANSWER.

My dear little wife, so tender and true,
Don't let a thought of me trouble you;
I'm having quite the bulliest time,
Naught disturbing this frame of mine:
Business is slow, so I slip away
From the office early every day,
And gather a bunch of congenial boys
To motor along and seek the joys
The Club affords for the man bereft
Of wife or sweetheart lately left.
We tennis, golf, and smoke and think,
Take now and then the mildest drink,
Then drop in on some summer shows,
And so the jolly seasons goes.
Don't think of coming back, my dear,
You really are not needed here.

THE SEQUEL

That innocent man now wonders in vain
Why his wife came home on the very next train.

A WOMAN'S WISH.

Be reconciled when loved ones die
Remember safe from sin they lie,
And sorrow, too, can touch them not
All wrong and pain is now forgot,—
So leave the dead and let the living know
The joy that life can still bestow.

Thus does the world full oft advise
And many deem the counsel wise.

The feeling may be wrong, Sweetheart,
And yet when comes our time to part
I can not wish it should be so;
If I must be the first to go,
I shall not say: "Be reconciled,"
But—"Let sweet memories be piled
Around thy heart so very near
Thou never canst forget me dear."
"Be reconciled," I shall not say,
But—"Miss me more and more each day."

TWILIGHT TEA.

"Oh, won't you come to Twilight Tea
And have a cozy chat with me?
'Twill be the simplest little spread."
That's what the charming maiden said.
Of course no man with fancy loose
Could form a suitable excuse.
I went! and how that Twilight Tea
Played havoc unforeseen with me!
I held the smallest painted cup
Took now and then a nervous sup,
And every time I felt a quake
Because my clumsy hand would shake.
How could I mind that awful tea
When she was smiling so at me?
I lost my grip and with a crash
That cup and saucer went to smash!
I rose and said with sudden start:
"It's broken up just like my heart."
She calmly answered: "Never mind,
I have some glue, a special kind,
'Twill mend, I'll use it just for show
The break no one will ever know."
"But what about my heart?" I cried;
"I want a remedy applied."
She said, with most beguiling grace;
"Why, put another in its place."
'Twas then I used advantage fine
And captured hers for smashing mine.
That's why above all treats to me
There's nothing equals Twilight Tea.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE BALL.

HIS NOTE.

To grace the debut ball tonight
I'm sending you some roses bright;
As fair as they may your future be,
And yet this date is the doom of me,
Because I shan't have the ghost of a chance
Beside the fellows you'll meet at the dance;
And so I'm saying, "Good-bye, little girl,
You'll be a star in the social whirl."

HER ANSWER.

Thanks for the roses; they were dear,
Although your note was very queer;
'Twas most unkind to write so blue
When a girl was needing courage, too.
Perhaps you've forgotten the maxim old
Conceived in days when knights were bold
That: "None but the brave deserve the fair,"
So enter the ranks—if you *really* care.
Come! give the others a splendid shove
Since competition's the spice of love
(My heart hasn't changed position at all
And yet it's the morning after the ball).

WHY HE SENDS THE ROSES.

In dreamful wise a maiden's eyes
Reviewed her dancing list,
She softly smiled to realize
No single one was missed.
The ball had been her fairy dream
Of youthful bliss come true,
Its joy would form a brilliant gleam
To gild the future through.
She closely scanned each partner's name
And felt somewhat amused,
And also just a little shame
To find herself confused,
In thinking "who" was "who," but still,—
When things were in a whirl
To place all personalities
Would puzzle any girl.
"It matters not," she whispered low,
"There's one I'll ne'er forget
He sent the roses that I wore
And they are fragrant yet."
('Tis so, somehow the flight of years
This subtle fact discloses,
A woman's heart will closest cling
To him who sends the roses.
Perhaps because their coming makes
A tender truth occur,
That something beautiful and sweet
Has made him think of her.)

WOMAN'S ARMOR

She heard her baby singing
Softly singing while at play,
And it seemed no sweeter music
Ever brightened any day.
Her soul she felt was shielded
With a child to guide it here,
And another, making Heaven
Seem so very real and near.

Then her spirit found the soothing
That an anchored faith had brought,
And her mood of meditation
Led her to this vein of thought:
One can understand how woman
May be tempted by the wrong,
How her gentle trusting nature
May be conquered by the strong:
But if her heart has ever known
The grace of motherhood,
And she be bound by deed of birth
To lead a soul to good,
She should wear an inward armor
Formed with principles of might,
That neither force nor circumstance
Can swerve from paths of right.

REMINDED.

O yes! I knew that death must come to all,
My tears had fallen oft for others' woe;
On faces fair I'd seen the shadow fall,
And wondered hearts could beat and suffer so.
But still the flowers bloomed as fresh and pure,
The sun shone bright and many lives were gay;
My own was rich in joy and love so sure,
I quite forgot that grief could find the way
Across my threshold's guard of rare content:
But ah! one day two sweetest eyes did sleep
Beneath such frozen lids I could not rent
Them open e'en to glimpse the love so deep
I knew was hiding there. A gentle face
That bravely smiled through any loss or gain
Now held a peace serene, a happy trace
Of something strange beyond the realm of pain.

'Tis true this life still pours its blessings out
For me, and yet a veil of sadness shades
The brightest hour and ever wraps about
My heart a sense of loss that never fades.

COMFORTED.

A message from James Whitcomb Riley's poem "Bereaved."

To me the joy of life was all undone,
For death had placed my only little one
Away from reach beneath the tender flowers,
And gloom had draped the hours.

At first I thought the awful stillness meant
A sleep that sobs could break, and so I rent
The air with cries that life his form would thrill.
But he is sleeping still.

A leaden weight of grief my spirit crushed;
All nature seemed in saddest sorrow hushed.
They said: "You will feel better bye and bye
If you will only cry."

I strove to lose my own in others thought
And read so many lines with wisdom fraught,
But yet they brought my wound no healing balm,
Nor broke the bitter calm.

But ah! one day as o'er a page I glanced,
A title held my eye, and so I chanced
To read those sweetest verses called "Bereaved"
And wept and was relieved.

And now I thank the Love Divine that would
So crown me with the bliss of motherhood,
Though soon the little arms did loose their hold,
And baby's life was told.

Aye, told on earth, but somewhere else I know,
Its promise doth to rich fulfillment grow,
And something of my own, through sacrifice,
Has entered Paradise.

For through the aftermath of peace I see
While death is hard indeed, yet still to be
Denied the gift of child to human heart,
Is far the sadder part.

HINT OF THE AUTUMN TINT.

A woman failed to realize
How cruel time forever flies
And steals away so much that's fair—
The things for which we women care:
So unobserving that forsooth
She wore the color shades of youth
When passing years had left their trace
Upon the freshness of her face.
Her friends awoke her to the fact
By quite a novel bit of tact.

Upon her birthday presents came,
In varied forms, but tints the same,
A shoulder scarf, a motor veil,
A breakfast robe with trimmings pale,
Some kerchiefs worked in fetching style,
And incidentals by the pile.
A volume filled with "Gems of Hope"
All done in dainty heliotrope.
Candied violets, purple hose,
A bunch of shaded ribbon bows.

The woman gave a little sigh
And said: "Tis very plain that I
Have reached the autumn of my days,
The time for mellow color's haze,
Since purple's many varied tone
In every single gift is shown.
I'll take the timely hint of truth—
Farewell the pinks and blues of youth!
And yet my heart is in its prime
Without a touch of autumn time."

WHY SHE WAS CROWNED.

Soon after the dawn of a perfect day
The flowers came out in fresh array,
Each one wearing its brightest and best,
As if by the angels freshly drest.
The Rose was pink as a maiden's blush,
Poppy attired in crimson plush;
Lily came out in her bridal robes,
And Buttercup in golden globes;
Hyacinth wore a purple shade,
Dahlia seemed from the rainbow made.
Pansy came as a beautiful thought,
In many tinted fancies caught.
Forget-Me-Not in the softest blue,
Heliotrope in her special hue.
This fairest crowd that ever was seen
Assembled to choose for themselves a queen.
The Judge to decide was big Sunflower,
And blossoms were there from every bower.
The breezes round them far and nigh,
Like breath of cherubs from the sky;
When each one bent its lovely head
To listen to what the Sunflower said,
Daisy peeped up with the cutest nod
That tickled the heart of the Goldenrod.
"Because of her sweetness all year round
I think Violet ought to be crowned;
She's never quit blooming since her birth,
But is always trying to brighten earth;
If winds and rain lay her low on the sod
She trusts that behind is a smile of God;
She just grows on in her modest way,
So I make her Queen of us all today."
They shook their leaves like a whispering voice
And quite agreed with the Judge's choice;
They sank to sleep when the sun went down,
And Violet quite forgot her crown.

FORCE OF CONTRAST.

She sobbed: "My sorrow is greater,
Far greater than I can bear,
I'm sure there was never another
So burdened with such a care."

She sighted by accident only
The weight of a neighbor's woe,
It shattered her sobs into silence
And all her rebellion laid low.

She said: "That cross is sufficient
The strength of a soul to destroy,
Beside it the depth of my sorrow
Assumes a resemblance to joy."

THE FACE OF PHILLIPS BROOKS.

They told me Truth was dead,
That Honor's heart was bleeding,
That Charity's drooping head
No human cry was heeding.
That Pity's tears were dry,
And Faith was lost in Creed,
That God was much too high
For earthly calls of need.
That love and trust and goodness
Are found not any more,
Except within the volumes
Of long forgotten lore.
My spirit drooped in sorrow
For loss of man's best friends,
I cried: "What use tomorrow,
Why struggle for such ends?"

I've seen a face today—
It's pictured silence speaks
For courage, truth and might;
Of purpose firm that seeks
To conquer Wrong by Right.
And such a soul is purely
A link from earth to God,
That proves the hope securely
Of life beyond the sod.
They told me false I ween;
There's greatness out of books,—
Hope smiles, for I have seen
The face of Phillips Brooks.

WHENEVER PA IS SICK.

Somethin's doin' and doin' quick
Whenever Pa is sick.
Oh, my! there's such an awful muss
And such a splendid sight of fuss
Whenever Pa is sick.

Bridget fills the water-bag,
Sister hunts a linen rag
Sarah makes a mustard plaster
While Pa is yelling: "Hurry faster!"
Baby sits and sucks her thumb—
The only one that's still and dumb.
But Ma just does most everything
Until she hears the doctor's ring.
Then she talks a bit with him
And takes him to the sick-room dim;
And when at last he goes away
We tip-toe round the livelong day,
And scarcely dare to breathe right quick
Whenever Pa is sick.

When Ma is sick we never know,
Except she moves a little slow,
And looks so tired round the eyes,
As though she'd had some quiet cries;
Sometimes she rests a little while
And gives the sweetest sort of smile
When I slip up and softly say:
"Ain't you feeling well today?"
Somehow I wish when she is sick
She'd make us hustle round as quick
As Pa does—so that we could know
And help her when she suffers so.

THE EASTER PROOF.

O lilies lend your perfumed breath
 To sweeten Easter dawn,
O birds trill out your gladdest songs
 To make melodious morn.
O poets pen some perfect gems—
 For inspiration pray,
With fitting words to speak the truth
 That Death is dead today.

O hearts bereft now cease to mourn
 O weary laden souls,
Lay all your heavy burdens down
 This hour your comfort holds.
As gloom departs and glory tends
 The joy-illumined way—
For Christ himself is living proof
 That Death is dead today.

A LEGEND OF THE LILIES.

The Savior's mother sad and lone
Kept watch beside the grave of stone.

No sleep had soothed her saddest eyes
Since she had seen the sacrifice.

Against the door that barred the dead
She laid her weary aching head ;

When in the gloaming's mellow light
She saw a blossom gleaming bright.

Some loving hand with tender care
Had placed a spotless lily there.

The mother's heart its presence blest
She gently clasped it to her breast.

Its subtle sweetness like a balm
Stole o'er her senses, bringing calm ;

Then peace into her bosom crept—
She closed her eyes and softly slept.

The weariness of flesh withdrawn
She woke at resurrection morn.

Then o'er the fading flower she bent
And to its heart this message sent :

"O lily, sacred be thy bloom
For bringing comfort to the tomb.

Where'er on earth His mem'ry goes,
Be thou the fairest flower that grows."

So proudly pure on Easter day
The lily bells of perfume sway.

THE REWARD OF ZACCHEUS.

The Gospel tells of one who craved
To see the Savior's face,
And followed all the crushing crowds
With never wearying pace:
But being very small in size
He could not get a glance,
'Til looking up one day he saw
An unexpected chance.

He hurried on ahead of all
And climbed a stately tree,
And from that height his view was clear
The passing form to see.
Then Jesus, noting his desire
And confidence complete,
Bestowed upon his eager heart
A blessing rare and sweet.

The special season for the soul
The fast of Lenten-tide,
Is rich in spirit gain to those
Who put the world aside;
And climb the splendid heights of faith
To view with vision clear,
The realm where perfect peace abides
And Jesus draweth near.

A LOST THOUGHT.

A lovely thought to a poet came
And nestled near his heart:
"Thou'lt bring to me immortal fame
When thou and I shalt part.

I'll clothe thee first in Art's array
In poesy sublime,
So thou may'st find a shining way
Adown the aisles of time."

A wondrous piece of verse he wrought
In rarest rhythmic rhyme,
With 'broidered rhet'ric finely fraught,
The words did sweetly chime.

Of love and fate and life and death
He made a touching theme,
Of moonbeams soft and flowers breath
He wove a happy dream.

The music of the rippling brook
The warm sun's golden glow;
And subtle secrets of the soul
His skill essayed to show.

He paused at last his work to probe,
When tears his vision crost,
To find that in the verse's robe
His lovely thought was lost.

HIS INSPIRATION.

I want an original valentine
An offering rich and rare and fine ;
O, Poet, pen me something sweet
In lover's rhapsodies complete.

Make mention of my lady's eyes,
Comparing them to fairest skies ;
Her mouth is neither large nor small
'Tis simply perfect,—that is all.

Her voice is like the rhythmic flow
Of mellow music, soft and low ;
The whitest lily in the land
Looks commonplace beside her hand.

She has a darling dimple where
It seems the most beguiling snare,—
Just say it plays upon her cheek
Among the blushes hide and seek.

A charming feature is her nose,
A graceful "outline in repose,"
All witchery seems hid within
The dainty moulding of her chin.

Some singer wrote about Jeannette,
Whose hair was like a silken net,
Enmeshing hearts in days of old
When knights were over-gay and bold.

HIS INSPIRATION

My lady's tresses would have fired
His fancy to such flights inspired,
That bells of praise in halls of fame
Would still be ringing with his name.

O, Poet, all your art I seek ;
I want this messenger to speak,
In language such that she may see
She owns the very heart of me.

Somehow I fear you won't enthuse
And so your service I'll excuse,
Just lay your pen upon the shelf—
I'll write that valentine myself.

FLATTERING.

"I cannot be your wife," she said,
Unto his sweet petition ;
I cannot pledge myself, for I
Am full of great ambition.

They met again in after years
She said with deep contrition ;
"I'll be your wife, aye, gladly now,
For I've no more ambition."

GENESIS OF THE ROSE JAR.

A maiden fair wore roses rare,
And both were blushing sweet,
Her happy eyes were all aglow
A lover brave to greet.

"My roses—aren't they perfect, dear?"
She said, and glanced above.
"They are indeed but pale beside
Thy face, my dearest love.

The blooms will quickly fade and fall
But you will fairer grow,
And dearer be with every year
Because I love you so."

When he had gone the maid recalled
The tender words he said,
Then caught a breath of faint perfume
That proved her roses dead.

She took them off to toss away
But paused with pensive sigh;
"Ah, roses, you are sweet in death
And shall I cast you by?

You lent an added charm to me
To glad my lover's eyes,
And oft, I know, as roses do,
A woman's beauty dies.

So heart and soul must sweetness keep
As do the leaves of roses,
That she may hold a nameless grace
When youth in age reposes."

Her flowers she dropped within a vase
A kiss to each she gave,
And so in jars throughout the land
The sweet leaves find a grave.

AN AUTOGRAPH ALBUM.

She found an old autograph album
That dated in sixty-two,
And she lived again in her girlhood
While looking its pages through.
The writing was awkward and varied
The sentiment flippant and deep,
The signatures wakened old friendships
At rest in memory's keep.
Its beginning she well remembered—
'Twas during the time of school,
A few of those early attachments
Had never yet grown cool.
Some rarest selections were classic
From Shakespeare, Shelly and such,
And others original strictly
With all of the amateur's touch.
"Be true to thyself," was given
By Mary, her mate at desk,—
A bit of Byronic effusion
In mis-quotation grotesque.
The boys wrote rhapsodies ranging
From "Grass around the stump,"
To "Roses red and violets blue,"
And "Sweet as a sugar lump."
Ah, here was a poem of beauty
By one who had loved her well,

AN AUTOGRAPH ALBUM

The name at its close was not needed
For plainly her heart could tell,
Just who had penned his devotion
In such a masterful style
With meaning in homage so knightly
Beguiling a hope the while.
Her sad tears fell on the album
Because of her youth's first beau,
For time had but mellowed the music
Of, "Darling, I love you so!"
She'd read in a recent listing
Of men in the battle slain
His name—and it brought her a quiver
Of deep mysterious pain.
And that was the reason she hunted
The library through and through,
To find that old autograph album
That dated in sixty-two.

MONEY BURNED.

He thought about it long and well
Before he asked a reigning belle,
If she would kindly let him call
And be her escort to the ball.
When she consented he was glad
And also just a little sad—
To find the carriage, flowers and such
Would surely cost him overmuch.

He phoned to ask her color scheme—
What roses would becoming seem,
It made him slightly nervous feel .
When she replied: "The Marechel Neil."
So scarce they were they cost him so
His bank account dropped very low;
And yet his pride was great that night
When he beheld the lovely sight,
Of that fair maid of many charms
Who clasped his roses in her arms.
She held them through the opening dance,
Then by intent—or merely chance,—
She laid them down with seeming care
Upon the radiator, where,
The heat consumed their beauty quick
And how the odor made him sick!
So when he went his homeward way
He to himself did softly say:
"I'll know myself a senseless pup
When I again burn money up."

AKIN TO JOSEPH'S COAT.

She bought herself a cream white silk to wear at social functions,

Her friends all said her pocket-book would suffer grave *com-*
punctions.

Because the goods was rich and rare, a recent importation,
The price was most extravagant for one of modest station.

The maiden wisely went her way and wore it through the season
She knew 'twould fine investment prove and time would show
the reason.

She had it cleaned the second year and used a different
trimming,

But soon from frequent use she saw its lustre slowly dimming.

She had it dyed a lemon hue that really proved entrancing,—
Becoming soiled around the train, she cut it short for dancing.
Another time the tint was changed to pink of blushing roses
When it became a dream of taste adorned in lilac posies.

She changed it next to softest blue like that of summer's
shading,

Then sadly saw it slowly show a subtle hint of fading.

She ~~had it dyed~~ *it black* and fixed it up to wear for church and calling,
'Twas kept in style and freshened up by frequent overhauling.
In after years a friend reviewing hours of youthful pleasure,
Inquiring of that cream white silk so often found a treasure,
Could scarcely believe the evidence that every doubt refuted;
Into a black silk petticoat that dress had *involut*ed.

EQUAL RIGHTS.

In days of old when man would give
His wrathful feelings vent,
He always *had his say*, and then
Got up and—went!

While woman stayed at home
Throughout the weary day,
And *wished* that he could *hear*
The things *she'd like* to say!

But now! the modern woman
Concealeth not her woes,
She also has her say! she too
Gets up and *goes*!

HERE'S TO JIM RILEY.

Talk about the glory
In sending of your name
A-shining down the ages
Upon the top of fame.
I'd rather be Jim Riley
And make a singing lay
Awaking tender feelings
And love that's here today.

For Riley grapples nature—
And teaching comes right through
The blushes of the roses,
The glitter of the dew.
Hearing all the music
The bird notes ever sound
Seeing all the glory
The sun is pouring round;
Finding lots of beauty
In any simple thing
Dressing up his verses
From thoughts the daisies bring.

Speaking sweet of women,
With reverence of God—
Believing Heaven's waiting
The other side the sod.
So here's to Jim Riley
Who has the rarest art,
Of dropping little blessings
Right into every heart.

LOVE'S DETRACTOR.

O songster singing with such smoothness

All thy strains are bitter-sweet,

So like a gulf of passion surging

Round pure hopes a winding sheet.

Full many rare and dazzling pictures

Hast thy fancy finely wrought,

But where in all their rhythmic rhyming

Is an elevating thought?

With dagger sheathed in brodered rhetoric

Thou hast thrust at noblest things,

Perchance some anchors have been loosened

By thy keenly polished stings.

And yet thou shouldst at least have spared

The grandest gift of God to earth,

Because thou hast not met pure love

Does that disprove its royal birth?

It lives in might today and he who doth

Beneath its scepter bow,

Doth serve the best, and proves himself

A truer poet far, than thou.

LOVE'S DETRACTOR

For shame to couple its fair name
With deeds from vilest cause begun,
When all the tender, brave and great
At its command to life has sprung.

'Tis not the glimmering mist of golden hair
Nor lips as red as wine,
The soul that deathless shines from sweet blue eyes
Is worthy lover's shrine.

O singer, go untune thy chord and blend
With what outlives the grave,
Enough of minor tones of loss,—go thou
And find the notes that save.

Yea, mortal man is man but he can rise
O'er passion's brutal sway,
With eyes so clear he sees beyond the doubt
That you would teach today.

THE BIRTH OF THE BLUSH ROSE.

The stars were bright, the moon was late,
Two lovers stood beside the gate,
A rose of white was blooming near
And slyly lent a listening ear.
"I love you, Dear, I love you, Sweet,
I pray you make my life complete.
My waking thoughts, my dreams are thine
O let me claim your heart for mine."
The maiden sighed and shook her head
And something most surprising said.
The wooer left with suit refused
But as he went he wisely mused:
"Her lips said, 'Nay;' her eyes said 'Yea,'
Perhaps it's just a woman's way;
My hope is not entirely slain,
Tomorrow eve I'll try again."
The maid (when he had vanished quite)
Said: "Blessings brighten in their flight,
'Tis strange he could not plainly see
I wanted to prolong his plea,
For love of him my heart does glow
And how I wish I'd told him so!
The white rose turned the softest pink
It made her blush to simply think,
How maids will play with love and fate
While Cupid hovers by the gate.

SOME ONE SAYS.

'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all,
If only for the memories
Thus made for sweet recall.

The love that's *real* is firm as fact
But fleeting fancies fly,
As lightly as the thistledown
To pretty passers-by.

The spark Divine is never dead
It holds immortal claim
And souls that win or lose its charm
Are never more the same.

SHE FORGOT.

As Bessie stood before the mirror
 Arrayed in festive style,
The charm of her reflected beauty
 Provoked a happy smile.

She turned to Grandmother sitting near
 And said: "Now honor bright,
What think you of me, Granny Mine
 On this my debut night?"

"Come nearer that my failing eyes
 May better see you, Sweet!
And let me feel the dainty dress
 That makes you so complete.
Soft white silk, and at your belt,
 Such wonderful roses rare,—
They blush with pride at being worn
 By one so sweet and fair.

But child! your shoulders! they are out!
 Why where's the body part?
The sleeves are missing, too! Such fashion
 Surely shocks my heart!
When I was young our party dresses
 Covered the throat quite high,
The sleeves were very long, or else
 Just passed the elbow by."

"Well, Granny mine, if say you so
 I'll dress this way no more;"
But Bessie's eye a twinkle held
 As she tripped out the door.

Next day to her mother's treasure trunk
 In the attic Bessie went,
Gayly humming a lively tune
 As over the tray she bent.

SHE FORGOT

Whatever could it be in there
To make her blue eyes glow?
A charming old daguerotype
Of many years ago.

She quickly burst into Grandma's room
Like a flash of morning light,
With both hands clasped behind her back
Enfolding her secret tight.

"You want to see something pretty and sweet?
Well, shut your eyes quick and guess."
Then up behind the big arm chair
Slipped happy mischievous Bess.

Put both arms round Grandmother's neck
Hugged close as close could be,
Cried, "One-two-three! I'm ready now,
Just open your eyes and see."

Grandmother looked and could scarce believe
The sight of her wondering eye
That met the picture of herself
Taken fifty years gone by!

Those eyes were like forget-me-nots,
That hair of burnished gold,
The shy young face held all the grace
Of a tender love untold.

So swiftly her thoughts went flying down
The vista of the years,
She had to take her glasses off
To wipe away the tears.

"Why that is the very dress I wore
To the famous Governor's ball,
"He led the opening dance with me
And made me belle of all.

SHE FORGOT

Then Bessie said: "'Tis a beauty gown—
But look at your shoulders there,
It shocks my sense of pride to find
They ever were so bare.

There's only a very little band
At the top of each dimpled arm,
Indeed you were a regal maid
In all your wealth of charm!

But Grandmother surely you didn't dare
Attend the Governor's ball,
In a waist as scant as this one is
For they weren't allowed at all!

Grandmother heartily laughed and said,
"O girlie, you are cute,
Wear what you please, forever-more
I promise to be mute,

But hug me tight and kiss me, too,
And promise to tell it not,
It's been so long since I was young,
You see, I quite forgot!

AS ONE OF THESE.

He grew to man's estate with still
His mother's faith in God,
Her firm belief had kept him good
And lightened every rod.
In falling leaf or blooming bud
He saw the Power Supreme,
Believing death a moment's dark
At dawn of Heaven's gleam.

But pride of learning woke one day
And whispered him a doubt;
"Are you a child to just believe
What others portion out?
So rich you are in knowledge—probe
The secrets God would hide,
Go find why sorrow sin and tears
Do human life betide.

From whence we came—and whither go
And why we're here at all,
Why Scripture seems so many times
Its meaning to recall."
With anchor loose he drifted far
Beyond the realm of Peace,
Resolved to pierce life's mystery—
Its key to man's release.

One evening near the hour when dusk
The sun's full glory shields,
He wandered far to ponder 'mid
The blossom scented fields;

When suddenly to meet him came
A child with eager pace.
"O sir, I'se glad you've come to take
Me from this lonely place."

AS ONE OF THESE

The red lips smiling spoke the while
The bright eyes danced with joy
"I speck my mama's sorry she can't
Find her little boy."
"What, lost my little man; why, aren't
You very much afraid?"
"Me scared? Ó no, I know that God
Is watching me," he said.

"Ah, child, you *think* he's watching but
However can you *know*?"
The wondering one replied: "I know
Cause mother told me so."
He clasped the trusting hand and led
The wanderer safely home,
And then again he pondered 'neath
The drooping starlit dome.

His heart was filled with longing for
The olden peace of prayer
His soul this cry sent sobbing through
The silent steeps of air:
"Oh, lost belief, I've weary grown
Of science, doubt and thought,
Dear God, I pray Thee give me back
The faith my mother taught."

“COMPARISONS ARE ODOROUS.”

I thought the blush of the blooming rose
Was just the loveliest sight,
But that was before I saw the glow
Upon your cheek so bright.

The violet seemed to be so sweet
That nothing could compare,
But that was before I found your lips
And the luscious nectar there.

The pansy's witching pensive face
So like some rare surprise—
It subtly brings to mind the charm
That slumbers in your eyes.

To me you seem a wonder bloom
Where all the flowers gay,
Have tried to lend their very best
To make a live bouquet.

There was once a maid of progress full of culture most refined,
And the aim of her ambition was to elevate her kind.
She bemoaned her narrow sisters of the straight domestic cut,
For allowing love to drive them in the matrimonial rut.

“Singing slumber songs for babies! what a shameful waste!”
she said;

“When they ought to raise their voices for their modern rights
instead!

What an awful lot of talent thrown away in darning socks,
What a vast amount of genius sewed in seams of useless frocks.”

“They should scorn the drudging trifles that absorb so much
of life;

Keep the heart and spirit far above the range of kitchen strife!
Grasp the higher education, win an independent claim,
Cleanse the laws, and aid the nation, should be every woman’s
aim!”

But—this charming maiden married, and it was a great sur-
prise

How the cream of her ambition was absorbed in making pies!
And the voice that rang for Progress, Liberty and Right!
Hummed a pleading tune to baby in the middle of the night.

While the brain that was so busy building castles in the air,
Scanned the butcher’s and the baker’s bills with close attentive
care.

And the feet that trod the lecture stage in dainty slippers clad,
Ran the treadle of a new machine that stitched for lass and lad!

Yet—the strangest point presented in that charming woman’s
case,

Was the fitness and content with which she slipped into her
place.

And she changed her text to preaching that a woman’s proper
sphere,

Is in doing daily duties well and filling home with cheer.

THE PICTURE'S PROPHECY.

In youth so very gay was she
Her face expressed such perfect glee,

An artist begged that he might paint
Her picture in position quaint,

As type of undiluted Joy
Without a trace of grief's alloy.

He copied every feature fair
The lovely mouth and wealth of hair;

But to his own and her surprise
He could not duplicate the eyes.

In spite of him the brush would draw
The saddest look he ever saw.

Until in sheer despair he cried:
"I'm forced to lay the work aside."

They met again in after years
And through a mutual mist of tears

They viewed the pictured face once more
And understood the look of yore.

THE EDITOR'S RECIPE.

Your manuscript, Sir Author, I will pause to criticise,
Departing from my custom for the reason I surmise,
If you will look intently into what I have to say
You may write a noveletto that will surely take the day.

You own descriptive powers of a lustre quaint and bright,
Your fancy soars away unto a most convenient height.
You robe your conversation in a garb of skillful grace,
And truly as an artist you can paint a lovely face.

Considered as a whole your work is really more than good,
And I should like to publish it, and candidly I would—
Did I not know the story would but yield a barren waste
Because it's far too proper for the "Fin de Siecle" taste.

So spice it up with kisses where the kissing's slightly wrong,
And pepper with embraces that will last a little long—
Then salt it down with phrases that will paralyze the ear,
And saturate the mixture with some situations queer.

Then dress it off with mingled motives no one ever had
And make it mighty hard to tell the good folks from the bad.
Be sure to have the ending a conundrum dark and dense,
To leave the reader mentally upon the anxious fence.
Or serve a sad solution altogether black and blue,
Then forward—and I'm sure the thing will quite exactly do.

A THANKFUL HEART.

She was feeble, old and poor,
Wealth and friends had left her door.

Her loved had reached the Better-land,
Her goods were in another's hand.

Thanksgiving morn alone she thought
Of all that life to her had brought.

Its clouds and sun, and smiles and tears,
The common gifts of earthly years.

Her girlhood, bright and gay and fair—
Its sheltered days debarring care;

Her wifehood rich in glad content
Its every task a blessing sent.

Then mother-love so deep and strong
Its faith and hope, and slumber song,

Her widow'd home so sad and lone
Where quenchless lights of memory shown.

All had come and all had past,
She was left to mourn the last.

She looked around her humble cot
Filled with thoughts of what was not;

Then kneeling down began to pray;
“For what shall I give thanks today?”

“Dear God, accept my humble part—
I'm thankful for a thankful heart;

A THANKFUL HEART

"Tis all the years have left to me
I long to rest it, Lord, with thee."

Her weary form rose not again—
Its spirit soared beyond earth's pain;

Her cry had touched the Father's will—
The thankful heart was cold and still.

The while the light of Heaven's grace
Was resting on the sweet old face.

TRANSIENT BLISS.

What would I be if given choice?
You ask in sweetest voice;
I'd like to be a rose, you know,
Since you love roses so.

I'd grow so fast and get so tall—
I'd climb the garden wall,
And slyly watch you come and go,
Until you caught the glow

Of crimson leaves among the green
Between the sunlit sheen,
Of other roses growing there
A-sweetening all the air.

You'd pluck me with your dainty hand
You'd praise my beauty grand,
You'd bend to catch my breath apart
Your lips might touch my heart!

You'd wear me o'er your bosom white
If only for a night,
And though such bliss so swiftly goes
'Twould satisfy a rose!

THE GIFT OF GETHSEMANE.

Putting earthly things aside
Pausing now at Lenten-tide,
'Neath the shade of sorrow where
Christ and souls communion share,—
What, O Life, has come to thee
Out of sad Gethsemane?

Care is hiding half her face
Joy is wearing softer grace,
Hearts are holding deeper love
Nearer draws the realm above.
Something sweet has come to thee
Out of sad Gethsemane.

Faith is lulling grief to sleep
Thought is probing Conscience deep,
Even Sin has chosen rest,
Patience fills the human breast—
Charity has come to thee
Out of sad Gethsemane.

Waits the radiant Easter morn
Full of glory yet unborn,
Spirits gently trace the light
Gain'st the gloom of passing night.
Over heights of Calvary.
Fades the sad Gethsemane.

Ring the anthems soft and slow
Heaven's mercy bendeth low,
Blending faintest human cry
Into melody on high;
This, O life, has come to thee
Out of sad Gethsemane
 The gift of Immortality!

AN ECHO FROM JUDEA.

From out the East in days of old
The wise men came their gifts of gold
 To offer;
The rich and rare from native lands
To empty into baby hands
 Their coffer.

The lowly shepherds followed, too,
The star of gold in sky of blue
 That glistened;
While angels sang a glad refrain
That fell to earth in sweetest strain,
 They listened.

So led alike by equal hopes
They met where life immortal opes,
 United:
Before the infant King Divine
Their lives to serve Him humble shrine
 They plighted.

From North and South, and East and West,
They're coming still in search of rest,
 Eternal;
When storms of grief their souls alarm
His tender love doth yield a balm,
 Supernal.

And true belief with service mete,
Full many gladly at His feet
 Are laying;
While He for every moment's care
With hours of peace beyond compare
 Is paying.

AN ECHO FROM JUDEA

O'er pulseless forms His promise gleams,
While broken hearts and shattered dreams

 He's mending;
The weak and sinful led astray
To wander from the better way
 He's tending.

From Afric's gloom to India's strands,
The darkest nook of farthest lands,

 He's lighting;
This world so often bathed in tears,
With all its wrong and woe and fears,
 He's righting.

The star that shone o'er Judea bright
In yonder sky for us tonight,

 Is gleaming;
The cross that rose on Calv'ry's hill
Is human souls from Satan still
 Redeeming.

MADE BY HAND.

"Oh, Grandma, see my valentine!
In wonder I am lost,
A-thinking how much money this
Artistic thing did cost!
Observe a dainty Cupid here
Suspended in the air
Above a splendid golden heart
That holds an arrow there.
This regal bunch of roses red,
These languid lilies white,
Daisies and forget-me-nots
And pansies, too, so bright.
The poem very plainly shows
The perfect poet's touch
Methinks it altogether cost
The sender over-much."

"Why, Grandma, are you crying?
Here's a tear drop on the rhyme.
Does memory make you sad today,
With thoughts of othertime?"

"Ah, child, old hearts are tender, too,
And long for vanished youth,
For loving words and pretty things
And sweetheart days in truth.
A valentine I once received
From such a dashing beau,
I never can forget because
It was my first you know.
You run upstairs and bring to me
That little box and keys,
I'll show you that same valentine,—
You'll promise not to tease?"

So tickled Kitty was to glimpse
A really true romance,
She hurried back to Grandma
Humming bits of song and dance.
Out came a bunch of letters
Of a dingy brownish hue,

All neatly tied together with
A faded ribbon blue.

The Valentine was last of all
And softly fluttered out—
’Twas just a sheet of letter paper
Time had fringed about.

“You read it to me, Kitty, dear;”
Said Grandma, with a sigh,
Her dear old heart a-tremble
And a twinkle in her eye—

“I love a little maiden
She’s sweet as she can be,
Just look into the mirror
That maiden for to see.”

With merry laugh, said Kitty: “Oh,
In wonder I am lost,
To think how very much of *thought*
That valentine did cost.

Who sent it to you, Grandma, dear?
You must have loved him well,
To cherish this effusion so—
Now, really, won’t you tell?”

“Indeed, I’ve loved him fond and true,
Full many a happy year,
For he who wrote that verse so rare
Is your own Grandpa, dear.”

“And proud am I that I am he,”
Said Grandpa, at the door,
“And she has been my valentine
These forty years and more.

Oh, Kitty, child, your valentine
Displays the costly art,
Now, just you wait ’till you get one
That’s written from the heart.

These modern, rare artistic things
With highly polished rhyme,
Don’t carry love to last, dear
Like those of olden time.”

THE CENTRAL TRUTH.

How can we banish self and find
The Christ that in us lies,
Unless by faith His spirit gives
The image strength to rise?

Not through the tortures of a Christ
Are human souls redeemed,
But through the love such suffering proved
Eternal hope has gleamed.

Salvation is not begged or bought,
But Jesus is the leaven,
That makes our weakest cry for help
Ascend to highest Heaven.

The frame of earth-made creed is worn
And totters from its throne,
Yet God's true temple stands entire
With Love the central stone.

As man oft times is hedged about
By modes of vice and sin,
While still in spite of all survives
The Deity within.

Some natures are so strong they stand
Erect by reason's light,
And ask no help or faith beside
An innate sense of right.

But others need abiding trust
In God's own tender care,
And could not brave the storms of life
Without the aid of prayer.

THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Yea, strip the dogmas dead and false
From off Religion's tree,
And twine about it broader views
But leave Redemption free!

For by its light poor captive lives
From sinful fetters break,
That would not dare for pardon plead
Except for His dear sake.

As souls approach the lonely hour
Of death's Gethsemane,
Their spirits may more clearly view
The Cross of Calvary.

A fact Supreme it stands against
The surging waves of Thought,
And ev'ry selfish motive dies
When 'neath its shadow brought.

MARK THE FOURTEENTH.

It seems the saddest sentence
Ever spoken or read,
Is this—in the second Gospel:
“They all forsook Him and fled.”

It sounds the depths of pathos,
’Tis loneliness supreme,
Within His sphere of sorrows
It forms the central beam.

He felt in time of parting
Whatever the world might do,
In loyalty unshaken
Would stand the faithful few.

But at the crucial moment,
With wrench and break of heart,
(And yet, with benediction)
He saw each one depart.

To me, the saddest sentence
I’ve ever in Scripture read,
Is this—in the second Gospel:
“They all forsook Him and fled.”

CHARACTER.

“She is a butterfly,” they said, “fast sipping
The freshest, surface sweets of girlish life,
With ne’er a solemn moment’s thought of dipping
Below the crust of joy to find the strife
The dark deceit and woe that shows not through;
How could she bear a cross—what would she do
Should sorrow come?”

For many years all things that tend to sadness
In kindness cast their shade another way,
To let her smile and bask in grateful gladness
And dream this earth but Paradise astray.
Yet suddenly foul wrong discharged its dart
To strike the center of her peerless heart.
And sorrow came.

But for an instant only did she bend
To take the burden up, then stood erect
With courage that should inspiration lend
To all who deem themselves grief’s own elect.
Unto the grandest heights of womanhood
She rose, and evermore undaunted stood
When sorrow came.

PASSING OF LIEUTENANT FRANK MOORE HARRIS
OF THE UNITED STATES BATTLESHIP
DELAWARE.

A man he was in whom there dwelt a firm resolve of soul,
To write his name with noble deeds on Fame's immortal scroll,
He put aside the life of leisure fortune offered youth,
And chose the path of Effort on the broad highway of Truth.

When Opportunity opened doors on vistas fair to see,
He entered where the portal read: "My country 'tis for thee."
When the crucial hour of trial came in facing shot and shell,
His dauntless deeds of daring are his comrades' pride to tell.

After many years of service, when near Attainment's height
The pausing of his noble pulse delayed the splendid flight;
As a masterpiece unfinished, made of purpose most intense,
To surely reach completion in the realm of recompense.

While over seas on his gallant ship 'twas duty's call to roam
His heart was always anchored safe in the port of Mother
and Home.

He lives in hearts he left behind—with all his friendship claimed
In memory's fadeless immortelles his presence will be framed.

"I question not the ways of God, but accept what His wisdom
sends,

Believing all things work together for His desired ends."

Such was the faith his lips expressed, and this should comfort
bring,

Though Reason stands appalled at Death's most unexpected
sting.

When such men die 'tis a nation's loss and each man feels it so,
For courage, loyalty and love are peerless traits to show.

"Look after the others first," were the last words he expressed,
And there indeed was character's illuminating test.

Many hearts are overflowing with the tributes they would bring,
And from the soul the soothing strains of sympathy would sing.
No nobler epitaph than this can inspiration make;

"Earth is happier having known thee, and Heaven is sweeter
for thy sake."

A RESULT OF FAITH.

Her face was faultlessly sweet and fair
With never a line or look of care,
And strangers thought the brightest days
Had dawned upon her life always;
While those who knew could scarce believe
A heart with so much cause to grieve
Could fail to break or grow so sad
'Twould lose the power of being glad,—
But she possessed the priceless gift
Of faith that never knew a rift,
Whose inner light had left its trace
Of perfect peace upon her face.
Against the gloom of earthly grief
Her character in strong relief
Shone clearly as a cameo wears
The image its dark bosom bears—
Of such an one the poet said:

“If any artist drew her head
His brush would paint quite unaware
A heavenly halo round her hair.”

THE COUNTRY PARTY.

Don't talk about the grandeur of your city parties fine,
The jolly fun and frolic of the country party's mine.
No short cut through the telephone to ask your girl to go,
But send a card "with compliments" and beg to be her beau.

The two mule wagon goes around and gathers in the crowd,
We wake the night up singing out with voices free and loud.
And O, the games with kisses in 'em, hush, my partner, hush,
They put your fancy lancers and your two-step to the blush.

"King William was King James' Son" upon the royal race,
Ne'er shines a brow that's fairer than my rural sweetheart's
face.

We'll form a ring and drop the kerchief—Hurry up its found!
Run in and out and back again, and 'swing Jennie Rinktum
round.

Hold fast the thimble—Hide the slipper—raise the gates so
high,

To let the lads and lassies on their way to supper by!
In summertime it's water melon, lemonade and cake;
In winter, pop the corn and nuts and make the cider shake.

Old Sister Phoebe's merry, too, let's take a promenade,
We won't go home 'til mornin' when the golden starlights fade.
And then at time of parting we so long to wait a while,
And do a little courtin' leanin' lightly on the stile.

BITTER, SWEET.

Love they call the sweetest part
Of earth or Heaven above,—
But what can heal the bitter wounds
That Love doth give to Love?

TWO SIDES.

Good memory many mortals hold
The greatest blessing yet,
But oft of worth outranking gold
Is power to forget.

ETERNAL FITNESS.

If strength of human hearts could bar the gates
Of death and keep the soul of mortal here.
Without the thought that parting somewhere waits
Would even Love be always dear?

THE MASQUERADE.

The "bal enmasque" was a dazzling scene
Glitter of gold and silver sheen,
Subtle strains of sweetest song—
Rhythmical music swayed the throng.

Out of the past from pages old
Came lovely ladies and heroes bold,
Charming folks from bright romance
Merrily moved in the witching dance.

Bashful John and Priscilla met
Romeo flirted with Juliet,
Maud Muller found the Judge was late
And he again berated Fate.

Robin Hood and Little Bo-Peep—
Looking still for the missing sheep,
Napoleon waltzed with Josephine,
And barn-danced with an English queen.

Oh! such a medley from Everywhere!
But fairest of all the fair ones there,
Was a stunning girl from the time of *Now*;
Before whom a suitor made his bow.

"O, give me your love, sweet maid," he cried;
"Put from your heart the veil aside,
I know you even behind a mask
But knowing your heart is a harder task."

She laughingly answered: "That's your guess
So long as you love me more or less;
A man will always think about
Whatever keeps his mind in doubt,
And so my heart's not on parade
But most of the time in masquerade."

A DOUBTING THOMAS.

Little Willie worshiped heroes and dreamed by night and day,

Of some day seeing some one who had faced a fearful fray.
A man who'd met the enemy and heard the cannon boom,
Who'd fought and bled, and trembled not before the darkest doom.

So when the great Reunion date was very close at hand
And all the splendid soldiers of his native Southern land
Were coming—really coming—where his vision might behold
The remnant of an army made of fighters brave and bold;
Full great was his elation when he heard his father say,
That they themselves would have as guest a gallant man in Gray!

'Twas then his pride inflated, overflowed to such extent,
He told the news to all the boys, just everywhere he went.
So when the noted guest arrived, although the hour was late,
A bunch of kids upon the curb awaited him in state,
Their bursting admiration could not long withstand the spell.
They set up such hurraing as surpassed the rebel yell.
But little Willie eyed him in the deepest sort of woe,
And in a high-toned monologue he let his feelings flow;
"That Vet is just a bluffer—he ain't never held a gun.
I'll watch when he ain't lookin' and I'll up and paste him one.
He's got his arms, he's got his legs, he's even got his eyes;
There ain't no sort of scar nowhere—them hero tales was lies.
I bet when shots was flyin' round, he just got up and lit.
I wouldn't be a soldier man no bullet never hit."

CREDIT—A PAIR OF SHOES.

His heart was heavy laden
 With an awful case of blues,
He said the world was all a sham
 And never paid its dues.
But swiftly his opinion cleared
 To bright and happy views—
He owed the transformation to
 A simple change of shoes.
For mortal flesh asserts its claim
 No matter what your lot
It's hard to be an optimist
 When your *sole* is cramped and hot.

A MODE OF COMFORT.

They really thought to lift her load of grief
Comparing with another's weight of woe;
'Tis true, the count of tears did overflow,
But weeping brings to some sad hearts relief,
And makes the hours of bitter sorrow brief.
Her nature suffered more in one fell blow
Than many in repeated strokes could know,
For depth of soul doth make the martyr chief.
And so 'tis vain to ever gauge a loss
Or try to judge the weight of any cross,
For One alone can fathom to the core
Divining where the healing balm to pour;
And 'tis no help when anguished spirits toss
To ever know that some one suffers more.

SONG OF THE SHIRT BUTTON.

High up in the ranks of the
 world's esteem, by right of
 worth he stood,
His intimate friends declared
 that he was unusually
 just and good.
But they didn't know, like
 a sailor he swore, and
 his gentle wife's heart hurt,
Whenever by chance he happened
 to find a button
 off his shirt!

He fought in battle, a leader
 brave, his men would
 his worth extol
And the principal point they
 dwelt upon was his
 wonderful self-control!
But his face flushed hot and
 his pulse beat quick,
 and his family moved alert!
When he painted things the
 shade of red 'bout
 a button off his shirt!

When death drew near he was not
 afraid to meet the
 caller grim,
And many a sorrowful tear
 was shed in
 memory of him.
But his heart could not have
 found repose—his pride
 had been so hurt,
Had he but known he was
 laid away with
 a button off his shirt!

MEDITATION.

Don't talk to *me* about *freedom* cause there ain't no such a thing!

It makes me feel so tired when I hear 'em shout and sing,
About America for which some heroes fought and bled,
I wish they hadn't done it but had give it up instead—

'Cause then I might have landed on another softer spot
Where boys is some considered an' laws don't make it hot.
For every every single time I start to have a little fun
Some guy is sure to holler: "It's agin the law, my son!"

Somebody's always fussin' when I try to take my ease,
So what's the use of freedom if you can't do what you please?
My Dad declares this part of earth for which his fathers fit
Is full of greatest plenty for the folks that up and "git."

Well, I've been gittin' all I could an' ain't got nothin' yet,
'Ceptin chance to eat and sleep and play and work and sweat!
I've also got some freckles an' am some bow-legged, too,
An' such a lazy feelin' when there's anything to do.

An' even on July the Fourth when fireworks make a noise
The grown folks go to yellin: "Be mighty careful, boys!"
So what's the use of braggin' when a bloomin' kid like me,
Ain't got a single blessin' that's big enough to see?

A SEQUENCE.

There came to her mind a beautiful thought
That haunted her night and day,
She gave no heed to its cry for speech
And it gradually died away.

There came for her heart a wonderful love
With tenderest sweetness rife,
She put it by with a careless word
And it passed to another life.

Then friendship offered its gracious hand—
She reckoned it only dross;
But went along her heedless way
And noted not its loss.

There came a time when her soul grew sad
Regretting the awful waste
She had made of the finest gifts in life
In the midst of her youthful haste.

Yet she gave no sign, but hid the pain
And said: "I shall not berate
The world and its ways because I reap
The seeds of a self-sown fate."

THOSE COMIC VALENTINES.

Said Mrs. Smith unto herself:

“From the airs of Mrs. Brown
I’m sure she thinks herself in style
The leader of the town.
She enters Church with peacock stride
Arrayed in feathers new
And thanks the Lord the eyes of all
Are turned upon her pew.
I’ve often thought her plumage
Needed drooping quite a bit
I’ll send a comic valentine
To give a timely hit.”

Said Mrs. Brown unto herself:

“Mrs. Smith believes her voice
Is quite the sweetest one on earth
And everybody’s choice,
But when she soars to Pisgah’s height
I long for worlds unknown,
And what she needs the most I’m sure
Is meekness in her tone.
I’ll send a comic valentine
That she herself may see,
And then perhaps on Sunday next
She’ll sing in a minor key.”

THOSE COMIC VALENTINES.

When Mrs. Smith dined Mrs. Brown
They spoke of olden times,
When they were young and valentines
Were made of polished rhymes.

They talked of modern comic things
That Envy sends about
With each a trembling secret fear
Her sin would find her out.

But Mrs. Brown dressed finer
Mrs. Smith sang higher.
Mrs. Brown still leads the style,
And Mrs. Smith the choir.

DUTY OVERDONE.

"Here lies the mortal part of one
Who died of duty overdone."
So said an epitaph I found
In an old forsaken burial ground;
A weary mortal rested there,
Freed from fetters of earthly care.

I thought how many I had known
To whom the words upon that stone
Might be applied with truth indeed,
Since "Duty, Duty," had been their creed.
Splendid souls in slender frames
Bowed beneath incessant claims
Failing only the fact to view
That some their part may *over-do*.

Submission may prove a greater sin
Than rebellion is—the giving in—
Allowing others to garner more
Than is their due—to keep the score
Of life's great game in part unfair
When each should have an equal share.

For every soul a duty owes
To self—to help its gifts uncloze
And fewer martyrs there will be
When eyes now duty bound shall see
That shielding others is not always
A thing deserving special praise
And yet just where to draw the line
Requires the lead of light Divine.

A MAKER OF HOME.

Thinking of her I clearly recall
She wasn't a brag housekeeper at all,
But O she had the sweetest way
Of making you want to stop and stay,
And never very far to roam
From any spot that was her home.
Wherever she dwelt she made the place
Become a Mecca of special grace.

When near her something seemed to steal
Across your senses and make you feel,
That overmuch care of many things
A weariness of spirit brings,
And often harnesses thought and aims
Too tight to materiality's claims.

Her presence meant pervasive peace
That made discordant motives cease.
The windows of her soul were clean,
Through which her vision saw serene
Across earth's dire vicissitudes
To Heaven's perfect interludes.

ON READING "THE MAN WITH THE HOE."

A moment list me, Poet, with thy heart
"Blood tinctured of a veined humanity:"
Can any soul be shackled unto death,
Can ages weight of tyranny destroy
In one bent form the living spark divine?
Because God knew hard fetters would be forged,
He sowed the seeds of immortality.
A consequence that evils reconcile.
For soon or late or here or other-where
The wings of aspiration will uplift.
Yet if thy vibrant voice now sounds the note
That wakes a present thought for future help,
Thou art indeed an instrument of grace
Thy song an offertory unto God.

CONVICTION.

To spend the precious privilege of life
Pursuing paths of personal pleasure alone,
Is a pitiful waste of earth's unlimited ways
In which to prove our heritage Divine.

For hearts enlarge by serving noble ends
And gain by drawing on their source supreme.
Spirits soar when seeking strength to raise
Another's aim to clear ennobling heights.

The pure in purpose find a peace secure
From every shock of varying circumstance.
Not all the horded wealth of the visible world
Has feather weight against one perfect seed
Of faith that safely shields the soul against
Intrusion of the smallest grain of doubt.

PERSONAL PRAYER.

Hold fast to Faith, dear one, hold fast I say
To faith in personal prayer firmly cling.
No matter what the scoffers claim
No matter what earth's happenings be.
Without it life seems naught indeed except
A contradiction grim and strangely sad.

From practice of personal prayer comes perfect peace,
A strength of spirit strangely calm and sweet.
A soul assurance that a will beyond ourselves
Is guiding our affairs. Though strong desires
May strive to serve as sails to float our mortal bark
Along the stream of life, we know if skies
Be dark or fair, with faith we'll anchor safe.
Take everything in trustful prayer to God
For nothing that affects the children of His love
Is trivial to the Father's understanding heart.

BON VOYAGE TO JAPAN.

We'll woo the breath of the balmiest breeze
To waft you safely over the seas;
But when you're sipping tempting teas
So quaintly served by the Japanese,
May thoughts of odorous coffee here
Draw home refreshment very near;
When the dainty cherry blossom blows
Recall the American Beauty rose;
When big chrysanthemums welcome nod
Remember the glow of the golden rod;
When the wooden rest disturbs your head
Then dream of your feather polliwog bed;
Should smiling skies your eyes ensnare
Remember ours are just as fair.
But if they serve strange stuff to eat
(Unless your faith is quite complete),
Just fold your tent and steal this way,
To meet warm welcome any day:
For friendship's cable strong and true
Will span the space from us to you,
And we prove our sense of "Noblesse Oblige"
When we lend of our best to the Japanese.

THE LOTTERY OF MARRIAGE.

He said he'd never marry any maiden city bred,
With foolish thoughts of fashion running riot through her
head.

No devotee of modern modes should ever share his life.
No woman wise in worldly ways would *he select* for wife.
He hied him to the country for a certain season's span,
And wooed and won a daughter reared by Mother Nature's
plan.

O hollowness of human hopes; how mortals will deceive!
He found he'd drawn a perfect chip of charming Mother Eve.
Right speedily she wanted what she'd never had before,
And furled the matrimonial sails to reach the social shore!
She breakfasts gave at 10 a.m. and dinings at high noon,
Then teas so light at 4 o'clock, and lawnings 'neath the moon.
She joined the clubs, both large and small, and learned to
elocute,

And rashly led the way in every stirring new dispute.
Oh, how she flirted, how she dressed, and how she loved to
dance!

To sample all frivolities she never missed a chance!
When on the very ragged edge of deepest dark despair
The humble knight did sadly plead before his lady fair.
She cried: "In waves of mammon I must quench my natural
thirst,

And after marriage get a taste of what you relished first."

STEADY DIET.

Take the world as you find it, dear,
With its wealth of wonderful charm,
And though it chances to hurt your heart,
It really means no harm.
The core of the whole is sound and sweet,
Though hard sometimes to believe,
When you get a shock of sore defeat
Through the devious ways to deceive.
Just battle along with a smile and a song,
Concealing the smart or the sting;
God's at the helm to right the wrong
And perfect adjustment bring.
So do the right thing regardless
Of either glory or pelf,
And reap the sweet satisfaction
'Twill bring to the soul of yourself.

VERBAL SWEETS.

She valued every pleasant word that gracious people said,
And trusted them 'till someone told her she should be afraid
Of dulcet tones of praise and always hold a cautious doubt
Of motive springs whenever verbal sweets were passed about.

She grieved at first, but soon this bit of wisdom cheered her
heart;

“When people speak me fair why should I think they play
a part?”

As light as thistledown some pretty speeches often are,
And others yield a virile force to carry comfort far.

The sauce that seasons and refines the polished social sphere
May show at times a verbal coat of very thin veneer.
No mortal ever can divine the meaning anyway,
’Tis God alone can truly judge the worth of words we say.

His wisdom only measures out the hidden real intent,
So I shall leave the doubt, and hope the happy phrases meant,
For words of appreciation are jewels in memory’s mart
And make an illumination of joy around the heart.

A marvelous magical power in humanity’s language lies,
And the word that is fitly spoken is more than we realize.
“Say something sweet to somebody” every single day,
Would be a splendid motto to hang on the world’s highway.

GOOD OLD COMMON SENSE.

He paid a man five dollars to phrenologize his head, and listened quite delighted unto all the fellow said. "I find a bump of genius lying undeveloped here; through this bump upon the brain I read your title clear. Just any role of high degree on which you set your will, nature has endowed you with ability to fill." He was propelled immediately by grim ambition's thirst, and finally decided that he'd go to congress first.

Full he was of great elation, with no thought of foul defeat, but somehow for some reason he did fail to take a seat. For governorship, for mayorship, for sheriff, too, he tried, but politics in every branch success to him denied. He grappled law and medicine, and editor became, and made a tour of lecturing until his theme grew tame; then he felt poetic fires run coursing through his veins, but Pegasus wouldn't harness to his heavy set of brains. At last he trod the tragic stage in high and mighty roles, but couldn't draw the people so's to harrow up their souls. Growing rather seedy, he bethought him of a farm, and reached this wise conclusion 'neath the grace of nature's charm: "I guess I'll throw my genius all away in self defense, and try instead to raise a crop of good old common sense."

A SINGER.

The mute but lovely flowers
Render tribute to the hours
Made melodious by your voice;
For when its tones you raise
In symphonies of praise,
Like human hearts they listen and rejoice.

LITERATURE.

Literature! Preserver of thought!
The brain's warehouse, where treasures brought
By brightest minds from every race
Desire an honored resting place.

A KEY TO SUCCESS.

The reader said to the writer:
"You rhyme with a master hand,
But the thoughts your words are clothing
I fail to understand."

The poet heard the verdict
And smiled at happy fate,
"With meaning safely hidden
My verse is truly great."

'Tis Brownesque and modern,
'Twill sell and bring me fame,
And make the harbor easy
For works that bear my name."

MISAPPLIED.

God smiled upon her days
Through many happy years,
She knew not sorrow's ways,
Nor felt a trace of tears.

But suddenly a woe
Fell deep into her heart,
Her memory let go
Its former gladsome part.

And that one anguish brief
Threw all her life amiss—
Instead of moulding grief
To steps of higher bliss.

A BELLE'S CONFESSION.

Which shall it be, which shall it be?
The charming maiden sighed,
So many suitors come wooing me,
And still they are all denied.
They say I'm fickle as well as fair,
My heart won't anchor anywhere,
But drifts on sentiment's tide.

There's Dick, who's handsome and debonair,
But then he's a trifle tall;
And Jim is graceful, gay and rich,
But just a little too small.,
Harry's an "all round" sort of man,
Attractive in every wise;
I marvel how I ever withstand
The love in his splendid eyes.
Reuben is gallant, tender and true
(The kind that but once adores),
And Sam the solemn, silent sort,
Before me his love outpours.

They call me fortunate all the while,
And yet they never can know
How often I envy the lucky maid
Who counts but a single beau.
For *the man*— the only man for me
Who sets my heart awlirl,
The one I could worship eternally,
Is in love with *another girl*.

WHO ISN'T?

She often said she'd never expose
Her ankle in order to show her hose,

But—she did!

Nor ever a waist would wear so low
That nearly all of her chest would show,

But—she did!

She vowed she'd not in corsets lace,
Nor paint nor powder her natural face,

But—she did!

She held that scandal is a crime,
But often spread it overtime;

She really did.

If fortune smiled she'd not grow proud,
Nor think herself above the crowd,

But—she did!

And should she marry she'd surely stay
At home and walk in duty's way,

But—she didn't.

Whatever she said she wouldn't do
She almost always did—it's true;

She did.

And she wasn't crazy—not a bit,
Just inconsistent—that was it—

Who isn't?

MOTIVE.

If in death my heart doth lie all cold and still
Will it matter if they speak me fair or ill?
If in brighter worlds I rise to bliss divine
Will it matter if they quite forget this name of mine?
Not for fame of earth would I be reckoned great,
Not for golden dower, nor yet for high estate.
But if gift or power within me sleeping lies
Lord, I pray that Thou wilt give it strength to rise.
Just to glad two tender hearts that hold me dear,
Hedging life about with love through all the year.
Yea, for purpose truly great I would be mete;
So they who gave me birth may say with hopes complete:
"This is our child."

CONSISTENCY.

(Masculine.)

He'd flirted all the summer long
By word and glance and subtle song;
He'd sworn to eyes of varied hue,
To those of gray and brown and blue.
Beneath the light of Luna's glow
He'd oft repeat: "I love you so!"
A twitch of conscience now and then
But proved him not the worst of men.
Perhaps he'd said more than he should,
And yet supposed they understood.
Through memory's mist he viewed them all,
Then put them by beyond recall,
For soon he'd wed the only one
To whom his real affection clung.
He loved her wisely, loved her well,
Far more than merely words could tell.
He made his heart a genial place
To hold the rapture of her face.
What's this? A letter? Yes, from her:
(How fitly some events occur.)
She sent the missive just to say
He needn't come the stated day;
Her promise that she'd marry him
Was but a summer's passing whim;
Perhaps she'd said more than she should,
But felt quite sure he understood.
He read it o'er and o'er again
Until his soul grew sick with pain.
Then by the gods he firmly swore
To trust a woman nevermore!

THE TEST.

In sorrow's crucial moments
Some friendships fall asleep,
Yet finer souls when grief prevails
Their vigils closer keep.

WHAT THEN?

Better to smile than cry,
Better to sing than sigh,
But what of sorrow stacked so high
That happiness can't get nigh?

A TREASURE.

In all the first creation's plan
When God his wonders wrought,
The greatest gift to mortal man
Was faculty of thought.

A MODERN MARTYR.

A woman knelt at close of day,
Yet for no special gift to pray,
But just for strength to hide the pain
That hurt her heart and made it vain,
For hope to whisper happy hours
Might still return as folded flowers ;
For well she knew no future year,
However fair or full of cheer,
Could wipe from memory the woe
Her soul had strangely learned to know.
She wished alone her cross to bear,
Nor cast sad shadows anywhere ;
Yet stinging tongues of slander spoke
And subtle accusations woke.
They called her frivolous and vain,
Too light to feel the force of pain,
And gradually suggested sin
As having lurked her past within,
When all her life was free from scar,
As spotless robes of angels are.

WE, TOO.

Old people seem to love to say
Their time of youth so far away
Was most superior to this;
In fact, so much is now amiss—

They tremble.

Distance lends enchantment, so
They see through memory's mystic glow—
They simply just can't understand
The pace this fast, progressive land
Is going.

It really causes them distress
To see the present style of dress;
The dancing takes away their breath,
It mortifies them most to death—

So suggestive!

And, Oh, the way the young folks talk,
They way they sit, and stand and walk;
The way they paint and powder, too—
In fact, most everything they do

Is shocking.

When we get old we'll talk the same,
To our descendants make the claim
That what we said and what we sang
Was quite devoid of silly slang;

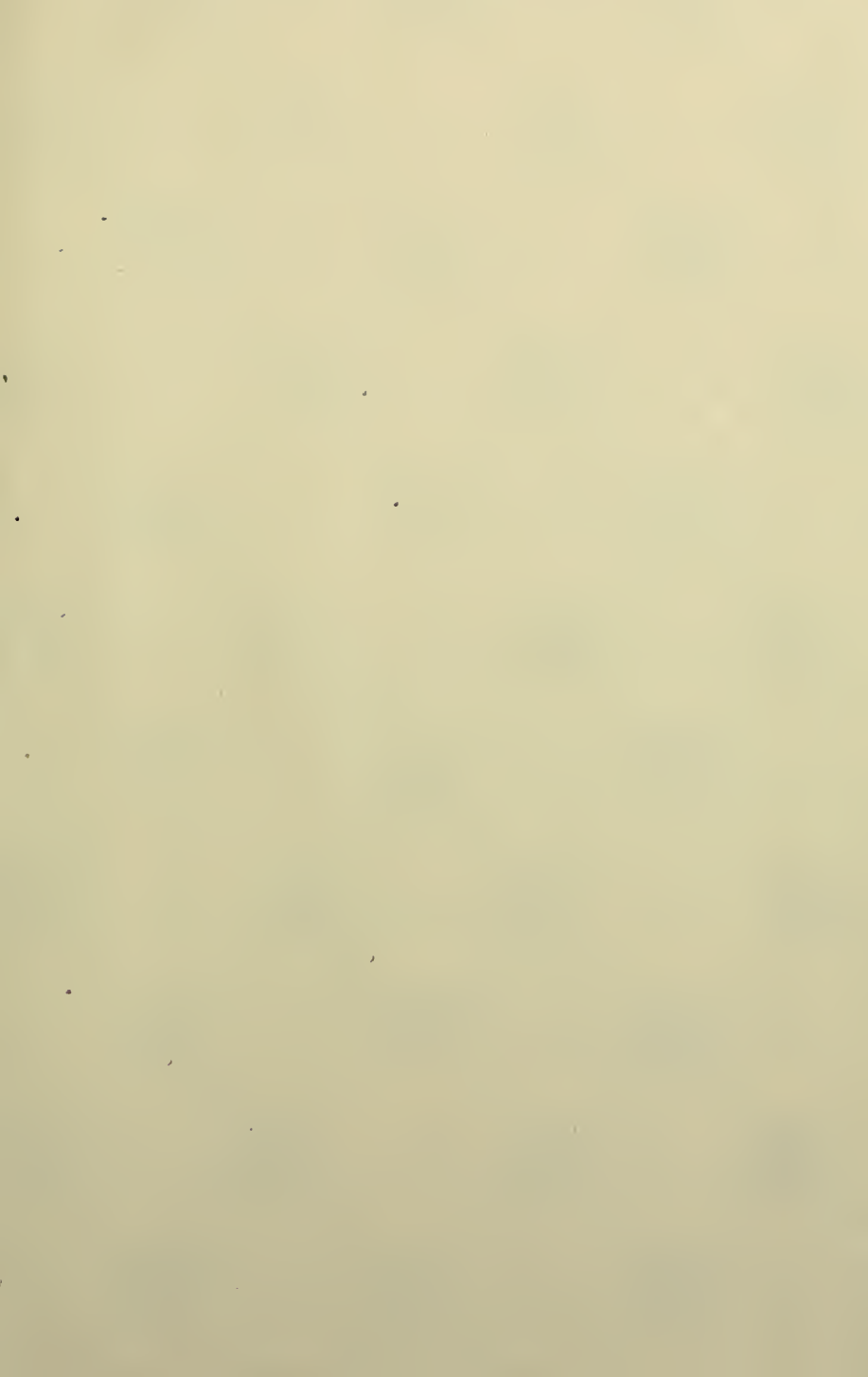
We'll forget.

We'll brag about our social code,
How sweet discretion was the mode;
That never bold, flirtatious eye
Was cast by maid to passerby—

Oh, no.

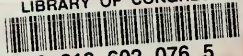
Yes, when our days of youth are gone,
And we are merely lookers-on,
We'll softly sigh and sadly say:
"Folks didn't use to do *that way*."

Indeed we will.





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